

USAID Program Educates Communities to Save the Lives of Women and Girls

Fourteen-year-old Urmila Tamang (name changed to protect her privacy) is from a small village in southern Nepal. A woman from a neighboring district approached Urmila's unsuspecting parents in 2002 with promises of a lucrative circus job for their daughter in Varanasi, a city in northern India. Ignorant about human trafficking, they sent Urmila without enquiring further about the nature of the job.



There, Urmila endured a year of labor exploitation and sexual harassment as an acrobat and tight rope walker.

The woman who had lured Urmila away from her family was encouraged by her success and contacted two other girls to entice them with similar tales of riches and luxury. Fortunately, the girls had participated in USAID's non- formal education literacy class and anti-trafficking training. They recognized these overtures as trafficking and shared this information with their facilitator who subsequently notified the police. Consequently, the woman was arrested and confessed that she had greatly profited by sending many girls to the circuses in India.

Knowledge about human trafficking among the community members saved Urmila from being further exploited. She was rescued, and is now an active member of a youth group working to raise awareness about human trafficking.